

To Members of the California State Assembly:

I am signing Assembly Bill 2599.

This bill provides necessary clarification for two important programs in California: the Umbilical Cord Blood Program and the California Birth Defects Monitoring Program. I support the continued research through the Birth Defects Monitoring Program which has the potential to dramatically improve the health of mothers and infants. This research was recently halted by an inconsistency in state law that is now corrected by this bill.

In order to protect California's leadership in this important research area, I have directed the Department of Public Health to immediately allow researchers access to blood samples held by the Birth Defects Monitoring Program until such time as research protocols are developed and finalized pursuant to the provisions of this bill.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger